

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2343

As Passed House:

April 20, 2009

Title: An act relating to achieving savings in education programs by revising provisions relating to diagnostic assessments, classified staff training, conditional scholarships, certain professional development programs, coordination for career and technical student organizations, and national board certification bonuses.

Brief Description: Achieving savings in education programs.

Sponsors: House Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Representative Haigh).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Ways & Means: 4/14/09, 4/18/09 [DPS].

Floor Activity

Passed House: 4/20/09, 77-21.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Makes the following K-12 programs subject to available funding:
 - diagnostic assessments tools;
 - certain classified staff training;
 - certain professional development programs;
 - inflationary adjustments to national board certification bonuses, for the 2009-11 biennium; and
 - certain teacher mentorship and assistance activities.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 20 members: Representatives Linville, Chair; Ericks, Vice Chair; Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Cody, Conway, Darneille, Haigh, Hinkle, Hunt, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Pettigrew, Priest, Ross, Seaquist and Sullivan.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Dammeier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Schmick.

Staff: Ben Rarick (786-7349)

Background:

Diagnostic Assessment Tools.

In the 2007-09 Operating Budget, funding was provided to make diagnostic assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, and science in elementary, middle, and high school grades available to school districts. The budget provided \$4.9 million to support two forms of diagnostic tools: (1) the development and implementation of classroom-based diagnostic assessments and progress monitoring tools for all subject areas included in the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), and (2) allocations to school districts to purchase diagnostic tools which supplemented the progress monitoring tools developed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Diagnostic assessments are distinguished from standardized assessments in that they emphasize formative rather than summative information about student progress. They typically provide information to educators more quickly than a standardized assessment, and are often used to make mid-course modifications in instruction and identify specific subject-area strands where students are struggling.

Classified Staff Training.

The Paraprofessional Training Program has provided professional development to paraeducators statewide since 1999. Training is provided at the district and regional levels to address time, budget, and geographic travel constraints of school districts and paraeducators. The funding supports grants to all of the Educational Service Districts (ESDs) to provide the regional paraeducator training opportunities. The fiscal year 2008 appropriation for this program was \$548,000. All nine ESDs are currently participating in the program. The professional development opportunities are designed to prepare paraeducators to assist certified teachers in the classroom, and includes content on the following topics: (1) reading and literacy; (2) mathematics; (3) behavior management; (4) autism; (5) English Language Learners; and (6) student motivation.

Professional Development Programs.

The OSPI must create partnerships with ESDs and institutions of higher education to develop and deliver professional development learning opportunities for educators that fulfill the goals of a statute that pertains to the expected outcomes of Learning Improvement Days.

Career and Technical Student Organizations.

The state provides funding to the OSPI to assist with statewide coordination of a variety of career and technical student organizations (CTSOs). They include Future Farmers of America (FFA); Skills USA-VICA; Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA);

Washington State DECA – an Association of Marketing Students; and Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). This funding level provides about \$20,000 to each CTSO for statewide coordination expenses.

National Board Bonus Inflationary Increases.

Teachers in Washington who earn certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) are eligible for two bonuses above their base teacher salary. A base bonus of \$5,000 for NBPTS-certified teachers was established beginning in the 2007-2008 school year and, by statute, is to be adjusted for inflation every year thereafter. Additionally, NBPTS-certified teachers are also eligible for an additional \$5,000 bonus if they work in a high poverty school, which is defined as an elementary school with a free or reduced priced lunch eligibility rate exceeding 70 percent of enrollment, a middle school rate exceeding 60 percent of enrollment, and a high school rate exceeding 50 percent of enrollment.

Teacher Mentorship and Assistance Activities.

The Teacher Assistance (Peer Mentoring) Program (TAP) provides beginning educators with mentoring support as they acclimate to the profession. The program is designed to improve the retention of new teachers in the teaching profession. The program provides a variety of services and supports to new teachers, including: (1) orientation to school and district culture and professional expectations; (2) mentorship from veteran teachers or educational staff associates; (3) release time for the mentor to observe and provide feedback to the mentee; (4) professional development on topics relevant to the needs of beginning teachers, such as classroom management, and tailoring instruction to specialized populations of students; and (5) assistance in developing a professional growth plan.

An amount of \$2.348 million was allocated for fiscal year 2009 in the operating budget. During the 2007-08 school year, according to the OSPI, 2,745 beginning teachers received assistance from the Teacher Assistance Program.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The OSPI's duty to implement several K-12 programs is made subject to available funding. The affected programs are:

- diagnostic assessments tools;
- classified staff training;
- certain professional development programs established in RCW 28A.415.350;
- adjustments to national board certification bonuses for the 2009-11 biennium; and
- certain teacher mentorship and assistance activities required by RCW 28A.415.250.

The bill also specifies that the inflationary adjustments to the base national board bonuses must be made up by the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, so that the bonus amounts in that school year are what they would have been if the inflationary adjustments had not been temporarily suspended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on April 11, 2009.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2009.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) I don't like sponsoring this bill, but the economic times call for it. I have sponsored amendments clarifying the issue that this is a two-year impact I am proposing, not a permanent change to statute.

(In support with concerns) Career and technical student organizations play an important part in preparing young people for the world of work. We support the language in Section 5 of the budget bill, allowing the career and technical student organizations to continue their work. There would have had more students here today to testify, but, for example, skills USA just had their state leadership and skills competitions last week. This funding is providing for the leadership that operates these organizations, and without it, the organizations would really face some difficulties. Without funding, these organizations would face the following options: they could try to find businesses that would be willing to provide support, however, the economy is struggling; they could increase student dues, but this places a burden on students. The only other option is to reduce or eliminate services, which has a detrimental impact on the education of the participating children. There are approximately 28,545 students in these organizations, and currently, this year, the money for these organizations is \$97,000. Future Farmers of America (FFA) began in 1928 by vocational education students in Virginia, and since then, the FFA has made a positive contribution to student lives all across the country. Participation can improve public speaking, leadership skills, natural resources knowledge, job interview skills, and career development opportunities. The FFA is no longer about just creating future farmers. It now has a much broader definition and scope of participation. This is a very small fiscal impact. For \$194,000, this is a very small amount per participating student.

(With concerns) As a marketing and DECA teacher, I witnessed firsthand the positive impacts career and technical student organizations have to offer students. In terms of the national board bonus, it isn't perfect, but it's one way we have to recognize different skill level of teachers. This bill sends a mixed signal to teachers who may be thinking about pursuing the certificate, but aren't sure whether the funding for bonuses will be there when they finish the certification process, which is both lengthy and costly. The two-year moratorium would partially address this issue. As a former instructor at a skills center, the benefits of the career and technical student organizations were evident. The bill is a technical bill as long as it has the sunset clause.

(Opposed) The Washington Education Association has some concerns with this bill. The bill eliminates the funding commitment for these various programs and subjects them to the vagaries of the state budget process from now on. For most of these programs, the added language doesn't change anything because the statutes that establish the programs do not set a specific funding amount. Making the bonus contingent on available funding removes the commitment to fully fund the bonuses and creates uncertainty as to what the bonuses will be

in future years. The WEA supports the amendment offered by Representative Haigh which would make the national board bonus change only a two-year moratorium and not a permanent change to statute.

Stand for Children has concerns with the reductions to the teacher assistance program, which is the teacher mentorship program in our state. Mentorship programs save the state significant money in terms of retention of new teachers in the profession. The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) has concerns with this bill. Both the TAP program and the national board are very much supported by PESB. Also, the alternate route program is designed to help the state during downturns in the economy when truly talented individuals who have been considering a transition into teaching can be brought in.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Haigh, prime sponsor.

(In support with concerns) Victoria Marsh, Anna Gibson, and Nik Grimm, Washington State Future Farmers of America (FFA); and Bruce McBurney, SkillsUSA Washington.

(With concerns) John Altman, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals.

(Opposed) Bill Freund, Washington Education Association; Jennifer Wallace, Professional Education Standards Board; and Jim Kainber, Stand for Children.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.